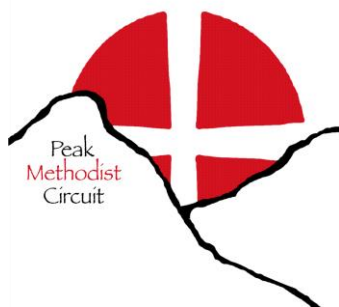


**'Staying Connected' 24.  
WB 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
Worship**



**Entrance into the Temple – Psalm 24**

*The Earth is The Lord's, and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it, for He has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.*

*Who shall ascend the hill of The Lord, and who shall stand in His holy place?*

*Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.*

**Pause for reflection**

As I come to worship, can I ascend the hill of The Lord and stand in His holy place?

Do I have clean hands and a pure heart? To who or to what do I lift up my soul?

As you look up to the hill and prepare to enter the holy place, listen to this piece of music, or if you don't have internet access read through the words, and be still before Him. Allow Him to take from you anything which should not be in your heart or mind, and confess to Him anything which puts a barrier between you and God.

**Music – Only By Grace.**

<https://youtu.be/F21gQwATaac>

*Only by grace can we enter, only by grace can we stand,  
not by our human endeavour, but by the blood of The Lamb  
Into your presence you call us, you call us to come.  
Into your presence you draw us, and now by your grace we come,  
now by your grace we come.*

*Lord if you mark our transgressions, who would stand?  
Thanks to your grace we are cleansed by the blood of The Lamb,  
Lord if you mark our transgressions, who would stand?  
Thanks to your grace we are cleansed by the blood of The Lamb.*

*Only by grace can we enter.....*

Gerrit Gustafson  
©1990 Integrity Music

**Prayer**

Lord, I come with gratitude in my heart, for the chance to meet with you, talk with you, listen to you, and to bow down in worship. I'm thankful for your grace and generosity, and for how you have made it possible by your death and resurrection, for me to approach you with confidence.

If there is anything which is in my heart or mind which ought not to be, please take it from me. If there are actions or words which I have taken or used which have been un-Christ-like, please have mercy on me and forgive them. Please fill me with your goodness, and the fulness of Jesus.

May my worship **of** you be inspired **by** you. And as we meet together, so transform my heart, that others might be drawn to you too.

In the name of Jesus, **Amen**.

**Scripture Reading** - Rom 12:9-21 (New Revised Standard Version)

**'Marks of a True Christian'**

*9 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup> love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. <sup>11</sup> Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>12</sup> Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.*

*<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;<sup>[b]</sup> do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God;<sup>[c]</sup> for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup> No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

As we open our hearts to God's word for us, we pray or sing:

**Song – Spirit of The Living God**

[https://youtu.be/84LOE\\_k8d\\_E](https://youtu.be/84LOE_k8d_E)

Spirit of The Living God, fall afresh on me  
 Spirit of The Living God, fall afresh on me  
 Fill me anew, fill me anew  
 Spirit of The Lord, fall afresh on me.

©Paul Armstrong  
 WMTV Music

**What is God Saying?**

One of the real privileges of Ministry is to have the chance to stand at the front of the chapel, crematorium or graveside, and pay tribute to the person for whom we have come to give thanks.

A tribute, or eulogy, will include not just facts about her/his life (where they were born, schooled or employed), but how they are remembered – what kind of person they were – what we can learn from them.

Preaching from this passage from the pulpit would allow me to be able to unpack this passage, and to focus on the specific instructions Paul gives us – along with examples of what his teaching might mean for us in our own context. However, to do so here would mean producing many more pages than you have become used to!

I think also, there are some passages which just seem to say it as it is, and that don't always need spelling out, interpreting, explaining or unpacking as much as others. They make sense, and sometimes there's nothing I or anyone else can add to make it any clearer.

So I'm not going to.....except to ask a question:

Could this teaching of Paul be re-worded and used as a tribute / eulogy to me or you?

In other words, could it be said of me or you:

*Her/his love was genuine; he hated what is evil, and held fast to what is good. She loved others with affection; He outdid others in showing honour. She never lagged in zeal, was ardent in spirit, and served the Lord. He rejoiced in hope, was patient in suffering, persevered in prayer. She contributed to the needs of the saints and extended hospitality to strangers.*

*S/he will be remembered as someone who blessed those who persecuted her/him. She blessed and did not curse them. He rejoiced with those who rejoice, and wept with those who weep.*

*We thank God for the way he lived in harmony with others, was never haughty, but associated with those who were lowly. She never claimed to be wiser than she was. He never re-paid anyone evil for evil, but took thought for what is noble in the sight of all. She sought to live peaceably with all. He didn't look to avenge himself, but entrusted those who offended him to God. She fed her enemies who were hungry and gave drink to those who were thirsty. He will be remembered as someone who was not overcome by evil, but sought to overcome evil with good.*

So....would that be a fitting tribute to your life or mine? If not, what needs to change?

### **Song SOF 1184 – The Potter's Hand**

<https://youtu.be/DqIfly0A3qg>

Beautiful Lord, wonderful Saviour,  
I know for sure, all of my days are held in your hand,  
crafted into your perfect plan.  
You gently call me into your presence,  
Guiding me by your Holy Spirit,  
teach me, dear Lord, to live all my life through your eyes.

I'm captured by your holy calling,  
Set me apart, I know you're drawing me to yourself,  
lead me Lord, I pray.

Take me, mould me, use me, fill me,  
I give my life to the Potter's hand.  
Call me, guide me, lead me, walk beside me,  
I give my life to the Potter's hand.

Darlene Zschech  
Copyright © 1997  
Hillsong {Publishing/Kingsway Songs

### **Time of Prayer**

O Lord, our hearts desire is that you will shape us by your hands into people you long for us to be – demonstrating the true marks of a Christian that Paul teaches us about.- - not simply for our benefit – nor simply for the benefit of your Church, but so that in us and through us,, those who wouldn't identify themselves as Christians might be drawn to you, and learn to love you.

Lord we ask that as your people – as those you have called to serve you at this time – we might so bring light to our communities, families, neighbours, friends and colleagues, so that the world around us – and the wider world would demonstrate too those distinctive marks of Christ.

Lord, there is so much intolerance, anxiety, sickness, abuse, hatred and fear, and sometimes we just feel helpless and powerless to effect change. But because of the cross we are empowered, and by your grace we are called. Give us a new love to serve others, a new willingness to effect change, a new zeal to help bring about transformation, and a greater desire to be the Church you call us to be today. In the name of Jesus, **Amen**

### The Lord's Prayer

#### Hymn STF 503 Love Divine

<https://youtu.be/qwHxRxER650>

Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesu, thou art all compassion,  
Pure, unbounded love thou art,  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.

Finish then thy new creation,  
pure and spotless let us be,  
let us see thy great salvation  
perfectly restored in thee,  
changed from glory into glory,  
'til in heaven we take our place,  
'til we cast our crowns before thee,'  
lost in wonder, love and praise.

Charles Wesley  
(1707-1788)

### Blessing

*Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations. Forever and ever. **Amen!** (Ephesians 3:20)*

Go in God's peace, and with the assurance that He will be with you, and He will accomplish in you and through you, far more than you could ever ask or imagine.

God bless you.

-----